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Message Text

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13
ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 NIC-01 SAJ-01 CU-04 SCI-06 DRC-01 EB-11 /127 W
---------- 019695
R 170920Z DEC 73
FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5532
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
USMISSION BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 2837

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, GW, PFOR, CZ
SUBJECT: BRANDT VISIT AND FRG/CSSR RELATIONS
REF: PRAGUE 2806, BONN 17874

1. SUMMARY: AS BRANDT VISIT TO PRAGUE PLAYED OUT, IT SEEMED CLEAR THAT EVEN PRINCIPALS SENSED THAT IT WAS ANTI-CLIMAX. WHILE CZECHS HAVE GROUNDS FOR SATISFACTION AT OUTCOME OF PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS, THEY, LIKE BONN, PROBABLY ANTICIPATE ONLY SLOW AND LIMITED CHANGE IN SALIENT ELEMENTS OF RELATIONSHIP. END SUMMARY.

2. WITH ALMOST PRO-FORMA BRANDT VISIT PAST, WITH TREATY SIGNED AND RELATIONS NORMALIZED, CZECHS CAN TAKE SOME SATIS-FACTION AT PRESENT SITUATION. FOR REASONS RANGING FROM NATIONAL PRESTIGE TO CONSONANCE WITH POLICIES EMANATING FROM MOSCOW, CZECHS HAVE FOR SOME TIME HELD REGULARIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH FRG AS MAJOR OBJECTIVE. DESPITE ABANDONMENT IN COURSE OF NEGOTIATIONS OF LARGELY SYMBOLIC DEMAND FOR GERMAN ADMISSION OF NULLITY OF MUNICH ACCORDS AB INITIO, CZECHS HAVE ACHIEVED TREATY CONSISTENT WITH THOSE BONN SIGNED WITH
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POLES AND SOVIETS. WITH BERLIN ISSUE, WHICH FOR A TIME

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THREATENED SIGNING, BEYOND PRAGUE'S POWER TO RESOLVE, BONN'S ACCEPTANCE OF CZECH TERMS WAS FOR PRAGUE A GRATIFYING WAY TO END IMPASSE.

3. WE SUSPECT THAT CZECH LEADERSHIP SEES ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH FRG AS ACHIEVEMENT NOT ONLY FOR ITS INTERNATIONAL STANDING BUT ALSO VIS-A-VIS ITS OWN POPULATION, WHOSE APPROBATION IS A VALUABLE AND LIMITED COMMODITY HERE. HOWEVER, WHILE MOVE IS UNDOUBTEDLY POPULAR, AVERAGE CZECH THINKS OF POSSIBLE BENEFITS IN TRAVEL, CONTACTS OR GOODS RATHER THAN OF NATIONAL PRESITGE.

4. IN ANY EVENT, WE DO NOT FORESEE VERY ACTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF BILATERAL RELATIONS. IN IMPORTANT COMMERCIAL AREA, AND DESPITE PRIVATE CZECH TALK RECENTLY OF STEERING TRADE AWAY FROM FRG, LEVEL OF ACTIVITY IS ALREADY HIGH AND NOT LIKELY TO BE AFFECTED MARKEDLY BY NORMALIZATION. AS FOR SPECIFIC AREAS, WE UNDERSTAND THAT, IN PRIVATE TALKS, BRANDT AND CZECHSSPOKE TENTATIVELY OF SOME DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURAL AND SCIENTIFIC CONTACTS, BUT THATQUESTION OF ANY AGREEMENT WAS PUT OFF AT LEAST FOR SOME MONTHS.

5. WITH THORNY BERLIN REPRESENTATION QUESTION LEFT FOR LATER RESOLUTION, AND ALTHOUGH BOTH PARTIES REALIZE THAT IT WILL BE SETTLED IN MOSCOW--IF AT ALL--NOT IN PRAGUE, ISSUE STANDS AS POTENTIAL ABRASIVE IF NOT DEALT WITH. FURTHER, NORMALIZATION MEANS THAT QUESTION OF EXIT OF SUDETEN GERMANS (60,000 CASES BY CZECH ESTIMATE) WILL INEVITABLY BECOME MORE ACTIVE AND PROBABLY A SOURCE OF DIFFICULTY IN LABOR-SHORT CZECHOSLOVAKIA. COROLLARY QUESTION OF CLAIMS AND REPARATION ALSO LURK IN BACKGROUND, WITH THEIR POTENTIAL FOR HARD FEELINGS. WITH HIGH RATE OF TOURIST TRAVEL FROM FRG, CZECH JAILS HAVE TYPICALLY HELD NUMEROUS VISITORS WHO BROKECURRENCY, CUSTOMS OR TRAFFIC LAWS. NORMALIZATION MAY INCREASE FRG'S EXPECTATIONS MORE THAN IT WILL CZECH WILLINGNESS TO DEAL GENEROUSLY WITH THESE OFFENDERS.

6. IN SUM, NORMALIZATION HAS ACHIEVED IMPORTANT OBJECTIVE IN TERMS OF CZECH AND WARSAW PACT POLICIES, AND PUTS END TO ANOMALY ALMOST THREE DECADES AFTER END OF WORLD WAR II. HOW-

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EVER, CZECHS SEEM NO MORE INCLINED THAN GERMANS TO GIVE HIGH PRIORITY TO A RELATIONSHIP WHICH MAY CONTAIN MORE BILATERAL PROBLEMS THAN FRUITS AND WHICH, IN ANY CASE, IS LIKELY TO BE GOVERNED PRINCIPALLY BY POLICIES ON BOTH SIDES WHICH INVOLVES FAR BROADER AND MORE BASIC INTERESTS.
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